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An
Essay
on
Emetics

John R. Purnell

admitted March 8. 1819.

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In consequence of some deranged
condition of the Stomach, arise not un-
usually, diseases, the most serious and
deplorable, to which the human system
is liable. These are, not to mention many
others, Gout, epilepsy, apoplexy, mania,
and fevers of almost every description.
As these different diseases are often cured
well, by certain substances taken in, im-
proper either in quantity, or quality, it be-
comes necessary, that they should be evac-
uated, or their effects counteracted; so
must each of these indications we have
recourse to the process of vomiting, which
consists in an inversion of the peristaltic
motion of the Stomach, and a spasmo-
dic constriction of its muscular fibres,
accompanied by a contraction of the
diaphragm and abdominal muscles.

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Vomiting may be induced by a great variety of means; independent however of all other measures, there is in our possession a set of medicines which have, from the remotest ages of antiquity, been appropriated to this particular purpose, viz. emetics. These may, according to Dr Murray, be defined, those medicines which produce vomiting, independently of any effect arising from the mere quantity of matter introduced into the stomach.

Now, emetics produce the inverted action, above spoken of, is a subject which has excited much speculative controversy in the medical world, but which, like many others of the kind, has never so far as I am acquainted, been satisfactorily explained. Darwin has attempted to solve the problem, by supposing it to be an effect of diminished, instead

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of increased action; he thinks that the
 force of nausea and sickness induces debi-
 lity of the stomach, in consequence of
 which its natural motions become
 gradually weakened until finally ~~the~~
~~finally~~ it stops for a while, when a
 new and inverted action takes place.
 How far this may be correct, I can
 not determine; I can however venture
 to assert, that it does not appear
 to be compatible, with our views of the
 nature of the substances producing it,
 some of them being highly Stimulant.

The susceptibility of the stomach to
 the action of emetics, is different, in diff-
 erent persons; owing, I suppose to peculi-
 arity of ~~of~~ constitution, and also to the
 character of the disease. In some diseases,
 for instance fevers, vomiting is very readily
 induced; whereas in others, as measles, dyspepsia,

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apoplexy, or that state of the system induced
by opium or other narcotics, it is with diffi-
culty produced, even by our most violent
medicines. Generally speaking, the suscep-
tibility of a part to the action of a stimu-
lus decreases in proportion to the frequency
of its repetition. This however is not the
fact as regards emetics.

of the use of Emetics in Disease.

FEVERS.

To remove the cause from the
stomach, or counteract the impressions there
generated by it, are two very important
indications in the treatment of fevers.
And to meet each of these we have
no medicines superior to emetics. In the
commencement of fever generally, our medi-
cines I believe are called for, but in
intermittent fevers of miasmatic situations

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They are peculiarly efficacious. An emble
is published just before the commencement
of the process. I have very frequently
known to prevent entirely its accession, or
render it mild in all its stages and of
much earlier duration.

As the two great ends of medicine
is the cure of fever has been for a long
time a subject of theoretical discussion,
and on which there is as yet much diffi-
culty of opinion; whilst one asserts that
they are productive of no advantage
unless they manifest or produce another as
totally opposite but they are most useful
where they produce no change at all. Both
of these opinions although so opposite, are
said to be founded on the basis of long and
extensive experience. I am a subscriber to
both. Either the former, however different
the views may be, which two gentlemen



attention as to the treatment of the
diseases of the female system. They
confer as in the property of, but, as
a business concern.

Hemorrhages

The Hemorrhagic medicines have
been recommended and used as in Menstruation
in the treatment of Diseases. The nature of their
action has been generally of course, particularly
by Catarrh, who attributes them from the
circumstances of their proving purgative
in its action. It certainly would not be
impossible to find out cases in which they
would be entirely unavailing, but on the
other hand I would I conceive be as
easy to find other cases in which they
might be useful, and beneficially employed
as on I presume would think of giving
the Patient when the Hemorrhage was

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considered as, & of the value of it; but in
those cases where the mother expects a
boy, or not blood the offspring, the jus-
tice cannot be doubted. As to the value,
in such an instance, observe there is nothing
perfect and happy, in every respect. There
have been some advantages and disadvantages
may be these left to be found than those
to be desired, or by chance the medicine be
given improperly.

As a source of trouble, I have
to be considered in the following. For they
have been found in very great numbers,
sometimes even in the hands of the
natives. I have seen a case of this kind in his hands,
in which a spontaneous vomiting was all
ended with the effect of vomiting. The same
may be.

Cynusoid Vomiting, whether this
is a disease or not, is not, as I thought



As soon as we had the efficacy of services in our
line is indisputable. In research, however,
most of our work is in the line, we are employed
and not to think of it.

From the expectorant power which they possess emetics have been long and extensively used as a means of the lungs. As they have the power of relaxing and dilating the surface, their efficacy may sometimes probably be explained on this principle. In the treatment of Asthma they were introduced by Astruc, and they constitute a very important part of the plan of treatment in this case. Scissus is sharpening, cough, is more benefited by this class of remedies than by any other to be useful they should be frequently repeated.

27/10/2022

Dist. Ther. is a disease, sometimes

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of gastric regurgitation is rendered extremely, in
anorexia, and the cramps which precede it,
and the spasms which succeed it.
Some cases of the disease may be traced
to such causes as have induced a general
and strong impression on the stomach,
as cold, or eating cold drinking ice, &c., &c.,
or the symptoms which precede and
succeed indicate a diseased condition
of the organ more especially in cases,
which is very apt to be an attendant
on the disease, when we meet with a
case of dyspepsia induced by such causes
might not emetics be used, and would they
not be for the kind of advantage? & lastly,
the pathology of which is thought of seems
to be analogous to the preceding, has been
treated by emetics.

Efforts to treat the nervous sys-
tem as we have treated of this



we are assumed by the foregoing view
of the new treatment to be a good
thing for us as a general health measure
and so beneficial even to those who
are not so much affected by the disease. But
practitioners of the present age acknowledge
nothing more. The great utility of medicine
under certain circumstances in the treatment
of the disease.

Effluvia is another disease which
causes the most serious, but they
can be so much cured for every case
of this kind, by the most violent means
which have been recommended to the
public. It would be apt to increase rather
than diminish the violence of the disease.
In the treatment of that form of disease
which arises from the excessive use of
warm drinks, they are said by Dr. Keight
to be very successful.



I will not write it twice from ~~the same~~
 a collecting, even a very ~~careful~~ ^{careful} &
 certain inevitable mistakes & errors
 since is the first time I have to write.
 The same observations were made ^{at the} ~~in~~ the
 bottom of the "Lake" and according to
 the recent water level "circumstances".

The following letters were being presented
to me when he was coming in, and I
and conversation of the elementary canal.
were immediately of the stomach in general
and to the liver &c. as being a common
disease when chronic & chronic was first
suggested by Dr. Simpson, after having
perused some observations relative to
the general nature of the disease in 1835
whether we should occasionally administer
them I should administer them on a
very different principle from that on
which they were formerly used.

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To make it would be to make a saving
in mission & the part is which I suppose
the disease to be cured and not to be
able to absorb & expel fluids.

That principal effect on which numerous
remedies is a consequence of its use is
in the scalp. The disease appears as in
the skin more successful than in the
is than in any other remedy. It has also
also been used in the Holourum & disease
similar to the first mentioned and not
without a cure.

Medicines have been strenuously recom-
mended and very successful, and a
the effects of the eye. But the
Purifier is now as has been entirely removed
by this plan of treatment. It was his
practice to coarsen the forehead by
an active smelt, and then to administer
some more of some other article.

which he continued for a considerable length of time.

In concluding my observations on the use of emetics, it would be proper for me to remark, that there are many other diseases, in which they are occasionally prescribed, and with equal if not superior advantages. Of these there are a great variety, which come under the care of the Physician, and several under that of the surgeon. To enter into a separate consideration of each of these, however, would be foreign to my purpose; it would also constitute a task, which I by no means consider myself adequate to perform.

